REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Remaining Claims

Fourteen (15) claims (Claims 1, 3 – 10, and 12 – 17) remain pending in this application through this Amendment. Claim 9 is amended to correct an informality inadvertently left uncorrected in Applicant's previous amendment. Claims 2 and 11 have been previously cancelled and Claim 17 is added herein. New Claim 17 finds support in the specification at page 5, second paragraph.

***Rejection of Claims 1, 3, 6, and 16 under 35 USC §103(a)* – Martin, et al.**

Claims 1, 3, 6, and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious under US Patent No. 6,220,845 to *Martin, et al.*

The present invention is concerned with the problem of ensuring constant quality of ophthalmic molds during the mass-production of the same. This is achieved by employing a single UV lamp for the cross-linking of several molds, thereby ensuring homogenous illumination of the plurality of molds.

In contrast, *Martin, et al.* teaches the use one UV lamp for each mold. (See Fig. 3, and Col. 8, lines 30 – 31). An uneven irradiation of the molds is therefore to be expected. However, this would not be critical in Martin, et al. because the invention is directed to a precure step introduced between the mold assembly and the cure step (See, Col. 4, lines 50 – 55). Such a step is intended only to partially polymerize the material into a "viscous gel." Col. 4, lines 57 – 58.

The fact that the apparatus of Martin requires a second UV irradiation after the first, is an indication that the first UV illumination disclosed therein would not be suited for the purpose of polymerizing the material into a useful contact lens.

Applicants submit that the use of only one lamp to irradiate a plurality of molds is not an obvious modification suggested by the cited prior art. Specifically, the attachment of several fibre optics to a single lamp has not been shown to be obvious in the ophthalmic arts where a high intensity of UV illumination is required, especially where a fully polymerized mold is to be obtained.

Accordingly, since the cited prior art does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed invention, Claims 1, 3, 6, and 16 are not rendered obvious by *Martin, et al.* Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claim 4 under 35 USC §103(a) - Martin in view of Biller

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious under US Patent No. 6,220,845 to *Martin, et al.* in view of US Patent No. 5,824,373 to *Biller, et al.*.

Martin, et al. has been discussed above. *Biller* does not provide further teachings as to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, since the cited combination of prior art does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed invention, Claim 4 is not rendered obvious by *Martin, et al.* in view of *Biller, et al.* Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claim 5 under 35 USC §103(a) - Martin in view of Nath

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious under US Patent No. 6,220,845 to *Martin, et al.* in view of US Patent No. 3,995,934 to *Nath*.

Martin, et al. has been discussed above. *Nath* does not provide further teachings as to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, since the cited combination of prior art does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed invention, Claim 5 is not rendered obvious by *Martin, et al.* in view of *Nath.* Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 7, 8, and 12 - 14 under 35 USC §103(a) - Martin in view of Kennedy

Claims 7, 8, and 12 - 14 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious under US Patent No. 6,220,845 to *Martin, et al.* in view of US Patent No. 5,521,392 to *Kennedy, et al.*.

Martin, et al. has been discussed above. *Kennedy* does not provide further teachings as to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, since the cited combination of prior art does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed invention, Claims 7, 8, and 12 - 14 are not rendered obvious by *Martin* in view of *Kennedy, et al.* Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claim 5 under 35 USC §103(a) - Martin in view of Sopori

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious under US Patent No. 6,220,845 to *Martin, et al.* in view of US Patent No. 5,217,285 to *Sopori.*

Martin, et al. has been discussed above. *Sopori* does not provide further teachings as to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, since the cited combination of prior art does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed invention, Claim 5 is

not rendered obvious by *Martin, et al.* in view of *Sopori.* Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing and in conclusion, Applicants submit that the 35 USC § 103 rejections set-forth in the Office Action have been overcome, and that the pending claims are not anticipated by or obvious over the cited art, either individually or in combination. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection(s) set-forth in the Office Action. Should the Examiner believe that a discussion with Applicants' representative would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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